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09/938,921 08/24/2001		Walter Clark Milliken	BBNT-P01-128	3501			
28120	7590 10/05/2006			EXAMINER			
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ONE INTER			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER			
BOSTON, 1	MA 0211	0-2624	2141				
				DATE MAILED: 10/05/2006	DATE MAILED: 10/05/2006		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

			on No.	Applicant(s)					
		09/938,92	21	MILLIKEN ET AL.					
	Office Action Summary	Examiner		Art Unit					
		Quang N.		2141					
Period fo	The MAILING DATE of this communication a or Reply	ppears on the	e cover sheet with the c	orrespondence ad	dress				
WHI0 - External after af	ORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REP CHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING nsions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. O period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period are to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by stature to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by stature to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by stature to reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailed patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).	DATE OF TH 1.136(a). In no evo od will apply and wi tute, cause the app	HIS COMMUNICATION ent, however, may a reply be tim Il expire SIX (6) MONTHS from lication to become ABANDONE	N. nely filed the mailing date of this or D (35 U.S.C. § 133).					
Status									
1)	Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24	May 2006							
		-	on-final						
3)□	, <del></del>								
-/-	closed in accordance with the practice under <i>Ex parte Quayle</i> , 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.								
Disposit	ion of Claims	<b>,</b>	-,,	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,					
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7)63	Claim(s) <u>1-16 and 18-21</u> is/are pending in the application.								
5)□	4a) Of the above claim(s) is/are withdrawn from consideration.								
	Claim(s) is/are allowed.								
	Claim(s) 1-16 and 18-21 is/are rejected.								
	Claim(s) is/are objected to. Claim(s) are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.								
		i/or election re	equirennent.						
Applicat	ion Papers								
9)[	The specification is objected to by the Examir	ner.							
10)⊠	The drawing(s) filed on 24 August 2001 is/are	e: a)⊠ acce <sub>l</sub>	oted or b) objected t	o by the Examine	r.				
	Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).								
	Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the corre	ection is require	ed if the drawing(s) is obj	ected to. See 37 CF	FR 1.121(d).				
11)	The oath or declaration is objected to by the I	Examiner. No	te the attached Office	Action or form PT	O-152.				
Priority (	under 35 U.S.C. § 119								
	Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign All b) Some * c) None of:			-(d) or (f).					
	1. Certified copies of the priority docume								
	2. Certified copies of the priority docume								
	3. Copies of the certified copies of the pri			o in this National	Stage				
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3) 🔲 Infor	nation Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/0	8)	5) Notice of Informal Pa		)-152)				
Pape	r No(s)/Mail Date		6)  Other:						

## **Detailed Action**

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 05/24/2006, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new ground of rejection is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

- (1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,
- (2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:

SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Claims 1-16 and 18-21 are presented for examination.

Art Unit: 2141

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is

directed to non-statutory subject matter.

4. Claim 21 is directed to non-statutory subject matter because it appears to have

no substantial practical application. To satisfy section 35 USC § 101 requirements, the

claim must be for a practical application of a 35 USC § 101 judicial exception. A

practical application of a 35 USC § 101 judicial exception is claimed if the claimed

invention physically transforms an article or physical object to a different state or thing,

or if the claimed invention otherwise produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

Claim 21 does not appear to result in a physical transformation nor does it

appear to produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. Specially, it does not appear

to produce a tangible result because merely describing "a ternary content addressable

memory coupled to a register unit and an operations unit within an arithmetic logic unit"

fails to describe, to use, or to make available for use, the result of the description in

order to enable its functionality and usefulness to be realized. The practical application

is not explicitly recited in the claim nor does it flow inherently therefrom, thus, claim 21

appears to be directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Art Unit: 2141

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be

negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-6, 8-15 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Curtis et al. (US 6,000,016), hereinafter "Curtis", in view of

Nataraj et al. (US 6,757,779), hereinafter "Nataraj".

7. As to claim 1, Curtis teaches a central processing unit CPU (i.e., microprocessor

80 as in Fig. 2), comprising:

an arithmetic logic unit (ALU 0 and ALU 1 as in Fig. 2); and

a content addressable memory (i.e., bypass network 110 includes a content

addressable memory array CAM 128) operatively coupled to the arithmetic logic unit

within the CPU (i.e., within the microprocessor 80) and configured to perform one or

more matching operations (wherein the CAM includes comparators that compare

destination addresses with source addresses) (Curtis, Fig. 2, col. 3 lines 15-50 and

col. 4, lines 31-48).

However, **Curtis** does not explicitly teach the content addressable memory is a ternary content addressable memory (ternary CAM or TCAM).

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches a policy-based router can use a content addressable memory (CAM)-based system to implement a filtering or classification function to determine whether an incoming packet matches a policy statement (i.e., matching network addresses), wherein a ternary CAM array 304/404 is used to store policy statements and mask data to be compared with processed policy information of an incoming packet (Nataraj, Figs. 3-4, col. 2, lines 12-32 and col. 7, lines 38-65).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the content addressable memory (CAM) is a ternary content addressable memory (TCAM), as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, since a ternary CAM requires a smaller number of table entries to represent each hierarchical address than a binary CAM (a single ternary entry "1XX" can be represented by 4 binary entries "100", "101", "110" and "111"), therefore, using a ternary CAM in place of a binary CAM would reduce a number of searches of the CAM needed in the worst case to find a matching entry.

8. As to claim 2, Curtis-Nataraj teaches the CPU of claim 1, wherein the one or more matching operations include a network packet processing operation (Curtis teaches the CAM includes comparators that compare the destination address with a source address) (Curtis, Abstract, col. 2, lines 39-44, col. 6, lines 1-31 and Nataraj, col. 16, line 47 – col. 17, line 5).

- 9. As to claim 3, **Curtis-Nataraj** teaches the CPU of claim 2, wherein the packet processing operation includes an address lookup operation (**Curtis, Abstract, col. 2, lines 39-44, col. 6, lines 1-31 and Nataraj, col. 16, line 47 col. 17, line 5).**
- 10. As to claim 4, **Curtis-Nataraj** teaches the CPU of claim 3, wherein the address lookup operation includes an Internet Protocol (IP) address lookup operation (**Curtis**, **Abstract**, **col**. 2, lines 39-44, **col**. 6, lines 1-31 and Nataraj, **col**. 16, line 47 **col**. 17, line 5).
- 11. As to claim 5, **Curtis-Nataraj** teaches the CPU of claim 1, wherein the one or more matching operations include a packet stuff/unstuffy operation (**Curtis**, **Abstract**, col. 2, lines 39-44, col. 6, lines 1-31 and Nataraj, col. 14, line 27 col. 15, line 13).
- 12. As to claim 6, **Curtis-Nataraj** teaches the CPU of claim 1, wherein the one or more matching operations include a packet classification operation (**Curtis, Abstract, col. 2, lines 39-44, col. 6, lines 1-31 and Nataraj, col. 9, lines 33-63).**
- 13. As to claim 8, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 1, but does not further explicitly teach a first register configured to store a first 32-bit operand; and a second register configured to store a second 32-bit operand.

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches a first register configured to store a first 32-bit operand (i.e., comparand register C1 storing a first 32-bit comparand); and a second

register configured to store a second 32 bit operand (i.e., comparand register C2 storing a second 32-bit comparand, such that comparand register pair C1/C2 is coupled/configured to receive a 64 bit value from the data bus 1604 as in Fig. 21) (Nataraj, Fig. 21 and col. 37, line 46 – col. 38, line 24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of a first register configured to store a first 32-bit operand and a second register configured to store a second 32-bit operand, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (**Nataraj**, col. 22, lines 8-45).

14. As to claim 9, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 8, but does not explicitly teach the ternary content addressable memory performs the one or more matching operations based on at least one of the first or second 32-bit operands.

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the ternary content addressable memory performs the one or more matching operations based on at least one of the first or second 32-bit operands (i.e., performing the one or more matching operations based on at least one of C1-C8 comparand registers) (**Nataraj**, **Fig**, 21 and col. 37, line 46 – col. 38, line 24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory performs the one or more matching operations based on at least one of the first or second 32-bit operands, as disclosed by Nataraj, into the teaching of Curtis, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (Nataraj, col. 22, lines 8-45).

15. As to claim 10, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 8, but does not explicitly teach the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array including a group of 64-bit entries and wherein, when performing the one or more matching operations, the ternary content addressable memory compares higher order bits of each entry of the memory array to the first 32-bit operand and compares lower order bits of each entry of the memory array to the second 32-bit operand.

In analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array including a group of 64-bit entries (i.e., TCAM array 1501/1601 can be configured for x32, x64, x128, or x256 operation, so 64-bits entries will span 2 row segments, for example, S1/S2, S3/S4, S5/S6 and S7/S8 of row 1522<sub>1-Y</sub>), and wherein, when performing the one or more matching operations, the ternary content addressable memory compares higher order bits of each entry of the memory array to the first 32-bit operand and compares lower order bits of each entry of the memory

array to the second 32-bit operand (i.e., when the system is configured in x64 mode, the 64-bit comparand word is loaded into all 4 comparand register segment pairs C1/C2, C3/C4, C5/C6, C7/C8 simultaneously for comparison with each of the 8 corresponding segments S1-S8 in each row of the TCAM array 1601 as in Fig. 21) (Nataraj, Figs. 15 and 21, col. 36, lines 45-62 and col. 37, line 62 - col. 38, line 24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array including a group of 64-bit entries and wherein, when performing the one or more matching operations, the ternary content addressable memory compares higher order bits of each entry of the memory array to the first 32-bit operand and compares lower order bits of each entry of the memory array to the second 32-bit operand, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array **(Nataraj, col. 22, lines 8-45)**.

16. As to claim 11, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 1, but does not explicitly teach the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array that includes a group of 64-bits entries.

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array that includes a group of 64-bits entries (i.e., TCAM array

1501/1601 can be configured for x32, x64, x128, or x256 operation, so 64-bits entries will span 2 row segments, for example, S1/S2, S3/S4, S5/S6 and S7/S8 of row 1522<sub>1-Y</sub>) (Nataraj, Figs. 15 and 21, col. 22, lines 8-45 and col. 37, line 62 – col. 38, line 24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array that includes a group of 64-bits entries, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (**Nataraj**, col. 22, lines 8-45).

17. As to claim 12, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 11, but does not explicitly teach the memory array comprises 32 entries.

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the memory array comprises 32 entries (i.e., TCAM array 1501/1601 can be configured for x32, x64, x128, or x256 operation, so 64-bits entries will span 2 row segments of 32 CAM cells per row, for example, S1/S2, S3/S4, S5/S6 and S7/S8 of row 1522<sub>1-Y</sub>, hence, 32 entries of 64-bits will include 8 rows of the TCAM array 1501/1601) (Nataraj, Figs. 15 and 21, col. 22, lines 8-45 and col. 37, line 62 – col. 38, line 24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory includes a memory array that includes 32 entries of 64-

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bits entries, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (**Nataraj**, col. 22, lines 8-45).

18. As to claim 13, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 1, but does not explicitly teach the ternary content addressable memory is configured to compare an operand to a group of entries.

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the ternary content addressable memory is configured to compare an operand to a group of entries (i.e., the TCAM array 404 is configured to compare an operand 168.69.43.100 to a group of entries 168.0.0.0/8, 168.69.0.0/16, and 168.69.62.0/24 as illustrated in Fig. 11) (Nataraj, Fig. 11 and col. 16, line 47 – col. 17, line 5).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory is configured to compare an operand to a group of entries, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array **(Nataraj, col. 22, lines 8-45)**.

19. As to claim 14, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 13, but does not explicitly teach set a first flag when the operand fails to match an entry in the group of entries, and set a second flag when the operand matches multiple entries of the group of entries.

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In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches the ternary content addressable memory is configured to set a first flag when the operand fails to match an entry in the group of entries, and set a second flag when the operand matches multiple entries of the group of entries (i.e., the CAM device 1200 includes a TCAM array 1201, address logic 1209, comparand register 1207, etc., and further includes logic for generating match flag, multiple match flag and/or full-flag signals) (Nataraj, col. 17, lines 15-22 and col. 18, lines 14-28).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory is configured to set a first flag when the operand fails to match an entry in the group of entries, and set a second flag when the operand matches multiple entries of the group of entries, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (**Nataraj**, **col**. 22, **lines 8-45**).

20. As to claim 15, **Curtis** teaches the CPU of claim 13, but does not explicitly teach the ternary content addressable memory is configured to sequentially load the group of entries from a succession of mask/value pairs transferred to the ternary content addressable memory.

In an analogous art, Nataraj teaches the ternary content addressable memory is configured to sequentially load the group of entries from a succession of mask/value pairs transferred to the ternary content addressable memory (i.e., the TCAM array 404 is configured to sequentially load a group of entries such as 168.0.0.0/8, 168.69.0.0/16, and 168.69.62.0/24 into to compare with a comparand/search key 168.69.43.100 as illustrated in Fig. 11) (Nataraj, Fig. 11 and col. 16, line 47 – col. 17, line 5).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the ternary content addressable memory is configured to sequentially load the group of entries from a succession of mask/value pairs transferred to the ternary content addressable memory, as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Curtis**, because it would allow the system to configure and enable a single CAM array to store and maintain a different table size in each different mode of operation, hence, the processing overhead in searching/matching for any word in excess of 32-bits to be dramatically improved by the flexibility configuration of the CAM array (**Nataraj**, col. 22, lines 8-45).

21. Claim 20 recites a system that contains substantially the same limitations as recited in claim 1; therefore, it is rejected under the same rationale.

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22. Claims 7, 16 and 18-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Curtis, in view of Nataraj, and further in view of Zuraski, Jr. et

al. (US 6,560,740), hereinafter "Zuraski".

23. As to claim 7, Curtis-Nataraj teaches the CPU of claim 1, but does not explicitly

teach the ternary content addressable memory is located within the arithmetic logic unit.

In an analogous art, **Zuraski** teaches a content addressable memory CAM 82 is

located within a repair logic unit 70, as illustrated in Fig. 8, to compare provided address

signals with the contents of memory locations within the CAM 82 to determine a match

(Zuraski, Fig. 8 and col. 9, lines 47-60).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data

Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of locating the

(ternary) content addressable memory within the (arithmetic) logic unit, as disclosed by

Zuraski, into the teaching of Curtis-Nataraj, because embedding/integrating the

ternary content addressable memory within the arithmetic logic unit would provide

support hardware-based searching/matching engine functions by quickly examining

incoming packets (address information/signals) and forwarding them to other systems in

the network for further processing.

24. Claim 16 recites a method that contains substantially the same limitations as

recited in claim 1 and 7; therefore, it is rejected under the same rationale.

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25. Claim 18 recites a method that contains substantially the same limitation as recited in claim 3; therefore, it is rejected under the same rationale.

- 26. Claim 19 recites a method that contains substantially the same limitation as recited in claim 6; therefore, it is rejected under the same rationale.
- 27. Claim 21 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zuraski, in view of Nataraj.
- 28. As to claim 21, **Zuraski** teaches an arithmetic logic unit (i.e., a Built-In-Self-Test BIST logic unit 20 of Fig. 6), comprising:

a register unit (a memory status register 68 of Fig. 6);

an operations unit (a data comparator 66 of Fig. 6); and

a content addressable memory (a repair LU 70 of Fig. 6 having CAM 82 as in Fig. 8) coupled to the register unit and the operations unit within the arithmetic logic unit.

However, **Zuraski** does not explicitly teach the content addressable memory is a ternary content addressable memory (ternary CAM or TCAM).

In an analogous art, **Nataraj** teaches a policy-based router can use a content addressable memory (CAM)-based system to implement a filtering or classification function to determine whether an incoming packet matches a policy statement (i.e., matching network addresses), wherein a ternary CAM array 304/404 is used to store policy statements and mask data to be compared with processed policy information of an incoming packet (Nataraj, Figs. 3-4, col. 2, lines 12-32 and col. 7, lines 38-65).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to incorporate the feature of the content addressable memory (CAM) is a ternary content addressable memory (TCAM), as disclosed by **Nataraj**, into the teaching of **Zuraski**, since a ternary CAM requires a smaller number of table entries to represent each hierarchical address than a binary CAM (a single ternary entry "1XX" can be represented by 4 binary entries "100", "101", "110" and "111"), therefore, using a ternary CAM in place of a binary CAM would reduce a number of searches of the CAM needed in the worst case to find a matching entry.

## Conclusion

- 29. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
  - <u>Takahashi</u> (US 5,519,649) discloses a microprocessor includes an arithmetic logic unit (ALU) and a content addressable memory for comparison operations.
  - Braceras et al. (US 5,638,315) disclose a content addressable memory for a data processing system.
  - <u>Chopra et al.</u> (US 6,510,509) disclose a high-speed rule processor using an array of compare engines that operate in parallel.

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30. A shortened statutory period for reply to this action is set to expire THREE (3)

months from the mailing date of this communication. See 37 CFR 1.134.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Quang N. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571)

272-3886.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

SPE, Rupal Dharia, can be reached at (571) 272-3880. The fax phone number for the

organization is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

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Quang N. Nguyen Patent Examiner

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